

How Solar Power Works

When the sun is shining, your solar system generates electricity, which means you will purchase less electricity from your utility company when your system is producing. Over the course of a year, your utility company will track the amount of excess electricity your system feeds into its electricity grid and use this credit to offset the costs of power you purchase from your utility when your system does not generate electricity, such as cloudy days or at night. If you produced more than you consumed, your bill will be zero. If you used more electricity from your utility company than your system produced, you will only pay for the amount used from the grid. This process is called net metering. Check with your local utility company regarding the specific terms of net metering programs.

Investing in California's Solar Future

Investors know the benefits of "green" assets. The solar market is expanding every day as more and more Californians install solar systems to generate their own clean energy. Research and development activities are helping to advance high-performance technologies and techniques to reduce solar system costs, making them easy for any home or business owner to afford. Rebate levels will decline as the market matures, systems become less expensive, and the value of solar power is recouped on electric bills.

The CPUC is committed to promoting environmentally sound electricity and has instituted the most ambitious renewable energy goals in the country. An investment in solar power through the California Solar Initiative will benefit California by diversifying its fuel sources, contributing to a cleaner environment, and spurring economic development and "green" jobs. Customers like solar energy because it lets them control their energy costs, protect their environment, and leave a legacy of clean energy for future generations.

Learn More By Visiting
GoSolarCalifornia.ca.gov

The Go Solar California website at www.GoSolarCalifornia.ca.gov is California's one-stop solar information center. To learn more about solar for new or existing homes and for businesses, schools, public buildings, farms, and more please visit today and Go Solar!



California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102
www.cpuc.ca.gov

www.GoSolarCalifornia.ca.gov

Photo Credits for California Solar Initiative-Funded Systems

Front: David Matuszak, Self Install, 4 kW Gilroy, CA
Supplier: Solar Electric Supply, Aptos, CA
Travis Richardson, Hansen Trout Farm; Fillmore, CA.
June 2007, 105 kW Installer: GW Richardson Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc. Engineer/Designer: Kris Sutton, Travis Richardson

Inside: Matt Ericson, Private Residence, Placerville, CA
2007, 9.7 kW Installer: Ericson Solar
Photo: Brian Petersen, Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., Chico, CA
2008, 1,258 kW Installer: Chico Electric



California Public Utilities Commission

California Solar Initiative



Go Solar, California!

Introducing the California Solar Initiative

Join the thousands of homeowners and businesses who are choosing to offset their electrical bills with energy from the sun. Clean energy looks bright with incentives for solar!

The California Solar Initiative is the second-largest solar incentive program in the world, with a goal to create 3,000 megawatts of new, solar-produced electricity by 2016—enough to power one million homes.

With the direction and support from the Governor and the Legislature, the California Solar Initiative is designed to foster a robust solar industry, promoting solar technologies that will serve our energy needs today and into the future. The California Public Utilities Commission oversees incentives for all solar installations except those in new homes.

Solar Incentives Available Statewide

The California Solar Initiative has **three distinct programs**, each with a portion of the statewide budget and solar installation goals:

- 1. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)** oversees solar incentives for existing homes and commercial, industrial, and agricultural properties for customers of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), Southern California Edison, and San Diego Gas and Electric Company (SDG&E). This program has a \$2.167 billion budget and a goal to reach 1,940 megawatts by 2016.
- 2. The California Energy Commission** provides solar incentives to builders in new home construction through the New Solar Homes Partnership. This program has a 10-year, \$400 million budget and a goal of 360 megawatts.
- 3. The Publicly Owned Utilities** program requires every municipal utility in California to offer solar incentives. The program represents a commitment of \$784 million over 10 years, toward a goal of 660 megawatts.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How much are the incentives?

A: The California Solar Initiative is a program that rewards performance: the better a system's performance, the bigger the incentive. As of January 2008, incentives for investor-owned utility customers range from \$1.55 to \$2.50 per watt. Incentives are paid according to either **expected** or **actual** performance, and incentives decline as more systems are installed across the state. Smaller systems (<50 kilowatts) can choose an upfront rebate that pays based on the system's expected performance. Owners of larger systems (>50 kilowatts) receive a payment based on actual system performance, paid out over five years.

Q: How do I apply for incentives?



A: Consumers should contact the solar program administrator in their utility territory to get started with an application:

- **PG&E customers** call 1-415-973-3480 or visit www.pge.com/solar
- **Edison customers** call 800-336-2822 X-42537 or visit www.sce.com/RebatesandSavings/CaliforniaSolarInitiative
- **SDG&E customers** can contact the **California Center for Sustainable Energy** at 866-733-6374 or visit www.energycenter.org
- If your utility is not listed above, visit www.GoSolarCalifornia.ca.gov

Builders of **new homes** in California should contact the California Energy Commission at 800-555-7794 or www.GoSolarCalifornia.ca.gov for information about the New Solar Homes Partnership.

How the Solar Incentive Process Works

1. Select a Solar Installer

Select a solar installer who will contact the appropriate program administrator on your behalf to apply for an incentive and receive a confirmed reservation that holds your incentive level for your project. The installer may also apply for applicable local permits, and walk you through an energy efficiency audit to help determine the best possible system design. It is recommended that you obtain **at least three bids** before selecting your solar contractor.

2. Install Your System

Your installer will work with you to install your solar system on your building and work with your utility to obtain permission to interconnect your system to your utility company's electrical grid.

3. Collect Your Rebate!

Once your system is installed, you will provide proof of payment to the program administrator and receive your incentive check!



Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, Chico, CA